

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 CU-04 NIC-01 SAJ-01

DRC-01 /152 W

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P R 071007Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1477

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8255

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJ: STUDENT SITUATION

REF SEOUL 8187

1. PRESS REPORTED THAT THAT PRESIDENT PARK SUMMONED
EDUCATION MINISTER MIN KWON-SIK TO BLUE HOUSE
DEC 7 AND INSTRUCTED HIM TO ARRANGE FOR RELEASE OF
ALL STUDENTS ARRESTED SUBSEQUENT TO OCT 2 STUDENT
DEMONSTRATIONS AND REINSTATEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS
EXPELLED OR SUSPENDED FROM SCHOOLS.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, NEWS STORIES REPORTED THAT ALL
SUCH STUDENTS HAD BEEN OR WOULD BE RELEASED TODAY
EXCEPT FOR ONE YONGNAM UNIVERSITY STUDENT SUSPECTED
OF ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW VIOLATION. NATURE OF HIS
OFFENSE NOT SPECIFIED.

3. NUMBER OF STUDENTS TO BE RELEASED IS 19
INCLUDING NINE UNDER INDICTMENT AND TEN SERVING
SHORT SENTENCES IMPOSED BY SUMMARY COURTS. ALL
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WERE CHARGED WITH VIOLATING LAW ON ASSEMBLY AND

DEMONSTRATIONS.

4. KOREA UNIVERSITY DEAN OF STUDENT AFFAIRS SAME DAY APPEALED TO EDUCATION MINISTER FOR RELEASE OF KU STUDENTS ARRESTED PRIOR TO OCT 2 FOR PRINTING UNDERGROUND NEWSPAPERS. THEY WERE NOT COVERED BY TODAY'S AMNESTY.

5. VARIOUS SOURCES REPORT THAT STUDENTS OF FOUR COLLEGES IN TAEGU ARE ATTEMPTING TO ORGANIZE A JOINT OFF-CAMPUS MEETING, POLICE SOURCES SAY THAT AUTHORITIES HAVE PREVENTED SUCH A MEETING THUS FAR.

6. THERE HAVE BEEN NO OTHER REPORTS OF STUDENT PROTEST ACTIVITY SINCE DEC 5.

7. COMMENT: FROM GOVERNMENT'S POINT OF VIEW RELEASE OF ARRESTED STUDENTS IS A MAJOR GESTURE TOWARDS STUDENTS. MOVE IS OBVIOUSLY DESIGNED TO ELIMINATE MOST PRESSING(AND LEAST POLITICAL) OF THE STUDENTS' DEMANDS.

8. GOVT OFFICIALS HAVE RECOGNIZED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO MAKE SUCH A CONCILIATORY GESTURE. HOWEVER, AT ONE POINT THEIR THINKING APPEARED TO BE TO DELAY THIS UNTIL WELL AFTER SCHOOL CLOSINGS TO AVOID THE IMPRESSION OF DIRECTLY BOWING TO ONE OF STUDENTS' MAJOR DEMANDS. GOVT HS APPARENTLY DECIDED IT MUST MOVE MORE QUICKLY TO CREATE AN IMAGE OF MODERATION AND READINESS TO RESPOND TO PUBLIC ATTITUDES. IT IS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY THAT PRESIDENT PARK HAS DECIDED TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF DIRECTLY AND PUBLICLY WITH LENIENCY TOWARD STUDENTS. UNDERHILL

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